2: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga
p 622

CONCLUSION

121 I have reached the end of my study of the Life of a South African
114 tribe in its principal manifestations, social, mental and spiritual. In
174 order to write a complete anthropological monograph, I ought to have also dealt at length with the physical features of the Thongas. This would have led me too far. However I have taken a few anthropometric measurements, which have been published in the *Bulletin de la Société neuchâteloise de Géographie* of 1917, together with an explanation kindly written by Dr. E. Pittard of Geneva, whose competency in this domain is well-known. I now come to my conclusion. The aim of this book being twofold, scientific and practical, I shall try in these final pages to answer two great questions, one appertaining to Science: How far can the present-day South Africans be described as Primitives? the other, of greater practical importance: How far can the South African tribe withstand the new condition of things brought about by twentieth-century civilisation?

I. *How far can the present-day South African Bantus be described as Primitives?*

One often hears of Primitive Humanity. Do the South African tribes belong to it? This is a very difficult question to answer, as we do not know exactly what Primitive Humanity was and what the evolution of these tribes has been. In the absence of any ancient written record, of any remains of an ancient stone civilisation, we can only make conjectures. But these are based on three sets of facts: Native traditions (to which, however, we must always apply severe criticism), traces of an old and obsolete past actually found in the language or in the rites, and comparison with early civilisations now discovered in palaeolithic settlements, or apparent on the ancient Egyptian monuments, etc. I do not claim to have obtained positive evidence on all points, and I shall leave a good number of interrogation marks in the course of this attempt. We know, however, that Science proceeds by successive approximations. I submit my table of the development of civilisation in the South African tribe as a hypothesis, open to any amendment which further discoveries may suggest. 174

I hesitated before writing anything about the *first period*. A number of Native traditions declare that, at a remote period, their forefathers had no knowledge of *fire*, (I. p. 24, II. p. 33). According to some of my Pedi informants, fire would be of relatively recent origin in certain clans. We cannot, however, believe that fire was ever absolutely absent, seeing that the cave dwellers of the Mousterian age, at the end of the glacial period, knew of it, as is attested by the fire-places found everywhere in the Mousterian deposits. It is probable that the first ancestors of the Thongas lived on roots and fruits, having but very simple weapons, and scarcely any clothing. This condition of things may have prevailed long before the Bantu stock was formed. The race perhaps passed through the totemic phase, which is still to be found amongst more primitive races (I. p. 335), and has left some traces amongst the Thongas up to this day. Mother-right, the traces of which are so clear, was probably the family system of those times, of which we know nothing definite. What was this system? It is impossible to say, and the only feature of which we are sure is that female descent prevailed during that period. Funeral rites probably existed, as they are met with in Mousterian burial-places, and they imply, as previously shown, a belief in

174 Ancestrolatry. Who knows if the idea of an All-Father, which is almost universal in primitive humanity, was not already in existence? The idea of the divine, in one form or another, would seem to have been one of the earliest conceptions of the human mind. Its appearance in the dim consciousness of this ancient being from whom we are descended was perhaps the signal of his attainment of a true humanity. But this is speculation, and I do not wish here to leave the solid ground of Science.

In a *second period*, the beginning of which it is impossible to fix and which I consequently separate from the first by dots, in the table, animals are domesticated, the goat probably first. Agriculture sets in. The soil is tilled with wooden hoes. Male descent supplants female descent and the patriarchate becomes the family system ; its further development leads to the formation of the clan, an enlarged patriarchal family. I conjecture that it is at this stage that the Bantu stock was founded (1). The language was probably the Ur-Bantu, and it is very interesting to reconstitute its main elements, grammatical features, and vocabulary, by a comparison with the present Bantu dialects. Things called by the same word in all existing dialects were probably in existence at that period (2). I imagine that the physiological taboos were already

(1) As regards the origin of the great Bantu family, I will only briefly mention the very interesting *theory of the cycles of civilisation*, advanced by some modern anthropologists. According to some scientists, there have been ten successive cycles in the evolution of mankind. First, the Tasmanian cycle, now extinct ; secondly, the cycle of the Boomerang, still existing in Southern Australia; third, the cycle of Totem, and fourth, the cycle of the Masks, both of which are met with to-day in North-Western Australia and in New Guinea. The fifth cycle is the cycle of the Bow, which succeeded to III and IV all over Melanesia and was superseded later by cycle VI, called Maleo-Polynesian. The latter forms the transition between the primitive cycles, I—VI and those of the semi-civilised and civilised peoples, i. e. the Hindu, the Chinese, the Semitico-musulman, and the European. According to this theory, Africa was invaded first by populations belonging to the three first cycles, which have been preserved down to the present day in the tribes of the Bushmen and Pigmees. A second invasion, composed of representatives of cycles IV and V, and called the Nigritian invasion, later on overran the greater part of the Continent, from Madagascar up to the Senegal. The Sudanese Negroes are the remnants of these Nigritians Later still a third invasion, called Protohamitic, brought to Africa elements belonging to cycle III, which had undergone a considerable evolution, and to cycle VI. These have mixed with the Nigritians and this fusion has given birth to the Bantus Opinions vary as regards the origin of the Bantu language, some believing that these Protohamitic invaders brought it with them, whilst others think that the Ur-Bantu sulted from the fusion of the Nigritian language with the language of the Protoham These theories are the result of a minute comparative study of the customs, lang es, implements and beliefs of all fractions of primitive humanity ; they do not be more than a hypothesis, but they will undoubtedly be useful to Science as such, and further study will show how far they can be adopted.

(2) This argument ought not, however, to be pushed too far. I have been able to ascertain that the fowl was unknown amongst the Pedi clans of the Northern

then in force, as they are found almost identical amongst Semitic peoples, as shown in Leviticus. The hierarchy must have soon followed the institution of patriarchism, and of the clan. Witchcraft probably existed ; it must have been a belief of primitive humanity, as it is still present in a very similar form amongst peasants and uncultured people in civilised lands. We have the right to suppose also that astragalomancy was practised. Some features of the Thonga language show that mythological conceptions then prevailed which seem to have almost entirely disappeared at the present time (I. p. 36, II. p. 306). This period must have lasted for tens, perhaps hundreds of centuries, until the South African tribes, after endless migrations, reached their present abode, probably pushing the early occupants towards the South ; at the end of the XVth century we find the Thonga tribe located near Delagoa Bay (1).

The third period is inaugurated by the invasion by the clans mentioned in our Introduction. White men appear, trade begins, stuffs are adopted by women, the men retaining their mbaya, Iron is introduced both by these invaders and by the White whale-fishers and traders. Agriculture undergoes a new development ; so also do military tactics,

Transvaal, in the beginning of the XVIIIth century, having been introduced by the Ma-Lemba about 1750. In spite of this, the Pedis call it *khugu*, the same word as *huku* in Thonga, Ur-Bantu *kuku*. The name of the thing may have been introduced at the same time as the thing itself, and incorporated by undergoing the phonetic permutations required by the dialect (Compare *Folklore*, Sept. 1908, The Balemba).

(1) The *Lourenço Marques Guardian*, in a very favourable review of Vol. I (Oct. 7, 1912), expresses the regret that I have not dwelt at greater length on the first origin and migrations of the Thonga tribe. The writer thinks that this was formerly a much larger tribe "the basic element in the Hamitic invasion of the coastal region." As far as I know, no document exists on which evidence on such questions could be based. The Portuguese chronicles of the XVIth and XVIIth centuries describe a state of things which is quite modern compared with the first Bantu invasion of South Africa, that of the *Ztadj*, to which Masoudi's "Golden Meadows" makes an allusion, A. D. 943. When the Portuguese travellers reached the shore of Delagoa Bay, the stream of migration had already taken an Eastern or North-Eastern direction (I. p. 23). — As regards inferences drawn from the wide-spread term *Thonga* (Ronga, Tonga), I think they have very little value ; this word probably means "people of the East," as *Kalanga* means people of the North. It is applied by Natives to those tribes which dwell eastwards of them, whatever their origin may be. It is a geographical designation, like the term Orientals, and discloses nothing as regards the ethnological features of the tribes to which it is applied. In fact, as regards language, customs, folklore, there is much less affinity between our Thongas, the Tongas of Inhambane, and the Tongas of Zambesi than between them and the Zulus.

We must be content to remain ignorant of facts as to which there exists no reliable record.

THE EVOLUTION OF

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	Costume	Implements Weapons	Food	Trade	State	Family system
1st Period (Pre-Bantu)	*Men.* Mbaya? *Women.* Skins?	Wooden clubs?	Fruits and roots.	?	Nomadic.	Female descent.
2d Period Ur-Bantu till 1500	id.	Pottery. Basket work. Wooden hoes? Bows? Wooden pillow.	Goat. Millet, Pumpkins. Game caught in traps.	Exchange of wares for produce.	Agricultural.	Male descent.
3d Period 1500-1820	*Men:* Mbaya. *Women:* Skirts of cloth.	Pottery. Basket work. Iron hoes and assagais. Bows.	Goat. Sheep? Ox? Millet. Sorghum? Beans?	Godji (p. 142). *Sales:* Amber, Ivory, Skins, etc. *Purchases:* Stuff, Beads, Copper, Iron.	id.	Patriarchate. Lobolo. Polygamy.
4th Period 1820-1910	*Men:* Zulu belt. *Women:* Skirts. Keimao.	id. Guns. Bows disappear.	id. Maize, Peas, Bananas, Mangoes, etc.	*S.* Mafureira, India-rubber, Skins. Commercial expeditions. Introduction of European money.	Agricultural. Yearly military expeditions in Gaza.	id. Decrease of Polygamy.
1910	Increase of European dress.	Increase of European implements. Decrease in Native arts and crafts.	id. European food. Alcohol.	Decrease of Native trade.	Work in towns.	id. Family life injured by the long absence of men.

the Natives now possessing better weapons. Decided progress has certainly taken place all round, the invading population being superior in civilisation to the old one. The Thonga language is definitely formed with its six dialects. Folklore is enriched by the contributions of all the various clans. Ancestrolatry still reigns in the religious beliefs, with a relatively clear notion of Heaven and of an All-Father. This change was gradual until 1820.

THE THONGA TRIBE

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Tribal system	Military system	Language	Folklore	Religion	Taboo	Magic
Totemism ?	?	?	?	Ancestrolatry. All-Father ?	Sympathetic.	?
Clan.	?	Ur-Bantu ? Sex-denoting suffixes. 11 Classes of Nouns. Formation of Thonga.	Mythological conceptions. Tales.	Ancestrolatry. All-Father.	Physiological. Hierarchic. Agricultural.	Witchcraft. Astragalomancy.
Invasion of neighbouring clans.	Lineal formation. Skirmishes.	Thonga. 8 Classes of Nouns. Six dialects.	Decrease of Mythology. Rich folklore.	Ancestrolatry. Clearer notion of Tilo, All-Father.	id.	id.
Formation and disappearance of military kingdoms. Dual Control. (I. p. 542).	Zulu circular formation. Cruel wars.	Progress of Ronga dialect. Adoption of European expressions (Portuguese Dutch and English).	Addition of Asiatic and Portuguese elements.	Ancestrolatry. Tilo conception less clear. Christianity. Islam. Possessions.	id. Military.	id. Possessions.
Authority of chiefs decreases. Increase of the number of detribalised Natives.	Decrease of military and political spirit.	id.	id.	id. Progress of Christianity.	Severity. of taboos decreases.	id.

Fourth period. At this time a new period begins, owing to the profound disturbance caused by the invasion of the Ngoni army under Manukosi. The men's costume changes. The clans are amalgamated under the Zulu conqueror. The military spirit increases. War, accompanied by bloodshed and all the Zulu war-panoply, replaces the skirmishes of former times. In Gazaland the year is divided into two halves, one for agricultural labour, the other for the military plundering

174 177 expeditions organised by the Ngoni kings. Foreign elements increase in number and power. Asiatic and Portuguese influences begin to be felt. A considerable Native trade develops in Lourenço Marques. The Ronga clans dwelling near the town acquire more influence. This brings us up to the present time, which I need not describe more fully.

In 1920, we see European civilisation invading the whole territory of the tribe, by leaps and bounds, and the changes, which in previous decades had been slow, becoming rapid and profound. The tribe loses its coherence more and more ; the authority of the chief decreases and that of the White Commissioner increases. Taboos and ancestor-gods no longer receive much credence ; Islam makes some recruits, owing to intermarriage, and Christianity pushes forward its Missions. The few indications given in this part of the table show the trend of evolution at the present time.

This outline of the development of the tribe — an outline which is submitted, I repeat, with the utmost reserve, — does not confirm the opinion generally held in former times regarding Black tribes, i. e., that they are in a state of utter degeneracy. On the contrary, *a slow progress* may be observed, generally due to outside influences, notwithstanding the fact of long industrial stagnation ; this progress has been so marked in agriculture, in the family and in the social system, that it is no longer possible to describe the Bantus as absolute Primitives. They would be more fittingly spoken of as Semi-Primitives. On the other hand, there seems to have been almost complete *immobility* in the religious domain, even a process of degeneration, if the old monotheistic idea has really become less clearly defined in the last century. Folklore has been enriched, but, as a whole, the mental and spiritual life has evolved very little. Of course I do not mention the quite modern changes brought about by missionary enterprise and Islam propaganda.

II. *How far can the South African Tribe withstand the new condition of things brought about by Twentieth-Century Civilisation?*

177 There have been more changes in the South African tribe during the last fifty years than during the fifty or five hundred preceding centuries, and this process of transformation is bound to continue at a geometrical